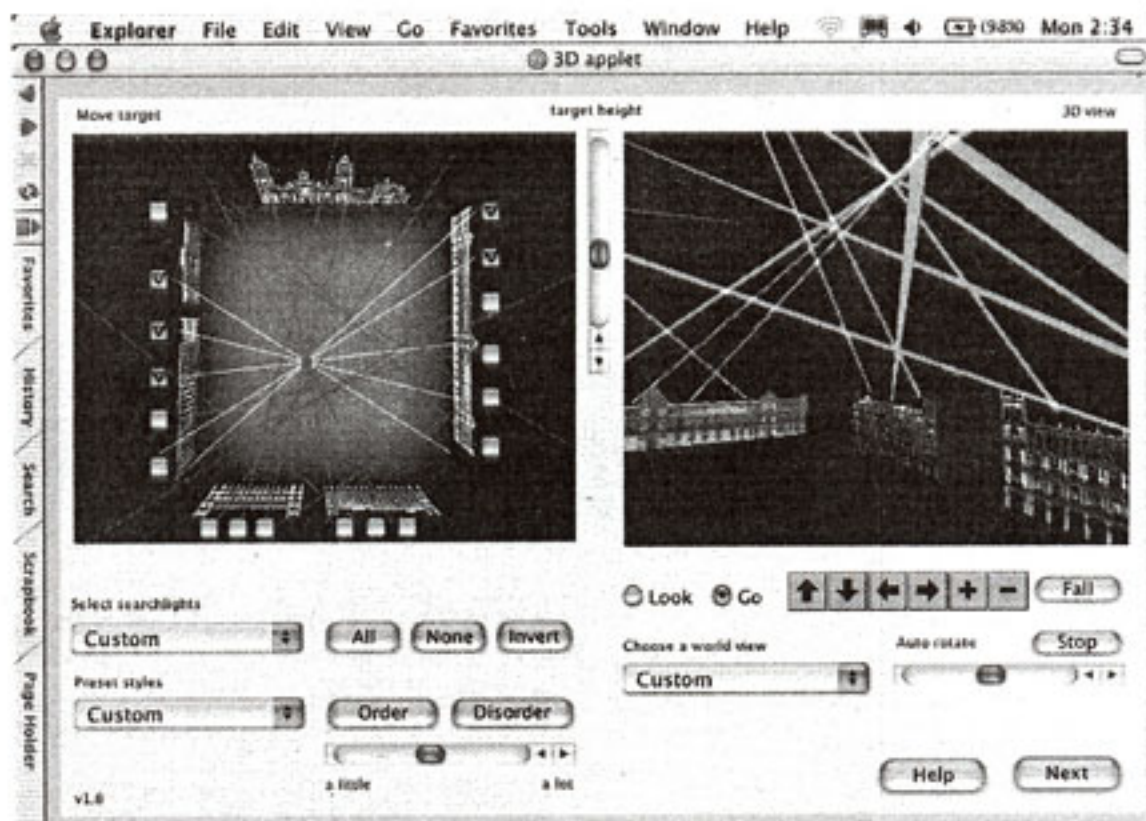




Carin Mincemoyer's "It Was All So Much Better in My Mind" at the Brew House Space 101 (left)

Rafael Hemmer-Lozano's "Vertical Elevation" at the Wood Street Galleries unique fortunes.



From Kinetic to Frenetic

BREW HOUSE, WOOD STREET GALLERIES EXPLORE VARYING LEVELS OF TECHNOLOGY

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On a recent Saturday afternoon at the Brew House Space 101, a little boy runs around the main gallery, examining each installation as if it were one part of a very long train that's chugging along its very long path. He doesn't sit still at any particular point for too long. This is partly because his little-boy brainwaves are like a series of Ping-Pong balls that keep firing back and forth until something, anything, gets caught in the crossfire. It's also because the installations are aesthetically akin to homemade toys, whose mechanics seem simple enough and lay close enough to the surface that seemingly the kid might be able to figure them out, if he wants to.

That's a shared quality of the work of Keny Marshal and Carin Mincemoyer, two very different artists who happen to be a couple and are exhibiting together in

Second Thoughts, this year's third prospectus show at Space 101. Marshal uses leftover industrial parts and everyday household objects to make kinetic sculptures that move slowly, rigidly and rhythmically, like robots, even though they aren't. Mincemoyer also uses familiar materials (colored paper, plastic figurines and bathroom accessories) in order to invoke our daily rituals, and then question what they mean. But despite their differences, the artists' work intersects at least once, if not more than once: Both make art for which their elegant, self-evident craftwork isn't a nice by-product, but a fundamental idea behind it as well.

This resonates strongly in Marshal's mechanical pieces, such as "Integrated Kinetic Experimental Apparatus," made from steel, motors and handmade electron-

ic components that activate a series of hulking mechanical parts in order to inflate and deflate trendy, bulbous, rice paper lampshades from IKEA. Large wires run from the box to the sculptures so that you can trace the power back to its source. Similarly, the motion itself is linear: You can see the gears turning, and then the steel rods push and pull on clamps attached to the shade.

Though the technology behind the piece is age-old, Marshal suggests that its simplicity is not the entire point here; rather, it's the sculpture's tactile nature — in an age when technology tends not to have a face we can see and, ironically, interact with. That's what Marshal does: He re-examines the meaning of technology by giving it back physical characteristics.

Mincemoyer does the same thing to some extent, though it's not the technology that she's addressing; it's the routines our technologies fuel. While Marshal gives technology a face, Mincemoyer gives the rote functions in our postmodern lives an element of humanity.

For example, she has installed a bathroom dispenser on a gallery wall that churns out perforated paper towels with fortunes stamped on each one: "You will become a statistic like many others," or "You will soon develop an ulcer" or "You will win the lottery and never have to work again." The fortunes can be positive or negative, pertinent or personally meaningless. They also contain Mincemoyer's wry sense of humor: The good ones tend to be far-fetched, and the bad ones hit frighteningly close to home. But the piece comes with a set of instructions: If you like what the future-telling dispenser has to say, then keep the paper. Otherwise, throw it in the

waste bin located below the piece, and choose your own fortune.

Unlike Marshal's pieces which all seem to be cut from the same leftover industrial aesthetic, the several installations Mincemoyer has on display here are visually diverse. In "Satisfaction, Occasionally" a stream of water shoots through several yards of convoluted plastic tubing set in a bathtub, while small toy fishies hang from the tubing as if traveling in a school. On a far wall hangs Mincemoyer's "Fresh Air Forest" — colored paper from which she's partially cut out pine tree silhouettes; they bring to mind the cardboard tree-shaped air fresheners that dangle from car rearview mirrors. And the last piece, which sits on a high shelf above the rest, is a jar of water in which Mincemoyer has suspended small figurines such as hot air balloons, beer bottles, a horse, a cowboy, a cake and a princess. She has placed a translucent resin sheet in front of the jar that serves as a lens that distorts the images within the jar.

You'd be hard pressed to find visual congruencies among Mincemoyer's art, though it's quite clear that they're all hers. Each one puts a new spin on familiar contexts — air fresheners, bathtubs, kitschy toys — just as Marshal also takes contemporary notions and puts them within a historical context. Both artists remind us that where we are is a product of what came before us, and that there's something else to come afterward. The boy in the gallery might not leave the show with more mechanical sophistication, but he will leave with a sense of wonder.

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